

February 7, 2009

My name is Brenda James and I am writing this testimony on behalf of the Connecticut Pardon Team, Inc, and the African American Affairs Commission.

In 1986 my daughter was in a fight in her high school. My daughter and I had been experiencing some difficult times because we were homeless. We were sharing an apartment with my mother in Windsor along with my second child's father.

My pregnancy was difficult but there were multiple issues's taking place during this challenging time.

One day I looked in the Blue Pages of the telephone book and discovered that there was an agency designated but not limited to meet the needs of the African American Family. I called to speak with someone when Denise Drummond introduced herself to me.

Denise Drummond is an outgoing, hardworking, and resourceful individual. I will never forget her and I am grateful that I met her. She immediately gave me names and contacts of other agencies within the State Of Connecticut to help me with my issues such as; child support, housing, employment and medical benefits but my most valuable contact referral was to Jacqueline Caron the founder of the Connecticut Pardon Team located in Norwich, Connecticut.

I and my daughter have been blessed over the years because of the above agencies. My daughter received an award for Student of the Year from the AAAC and I received a Pardon. I live in a subsidize housing arrangement and truly look forward to purchasing my own home one day in the future but it is because of agencies like the AAAC and the Connecticut Pardon Team that have given me hope.

I am requesting that the above agencies do not close the AAAC it would be a social injustice for all people if Legislation were to take away this agency.

I thank you for the opportunity to speak regarding this matter and I hope you will reconsider your decision.

Brenda James  
Supporter of the AAAC